



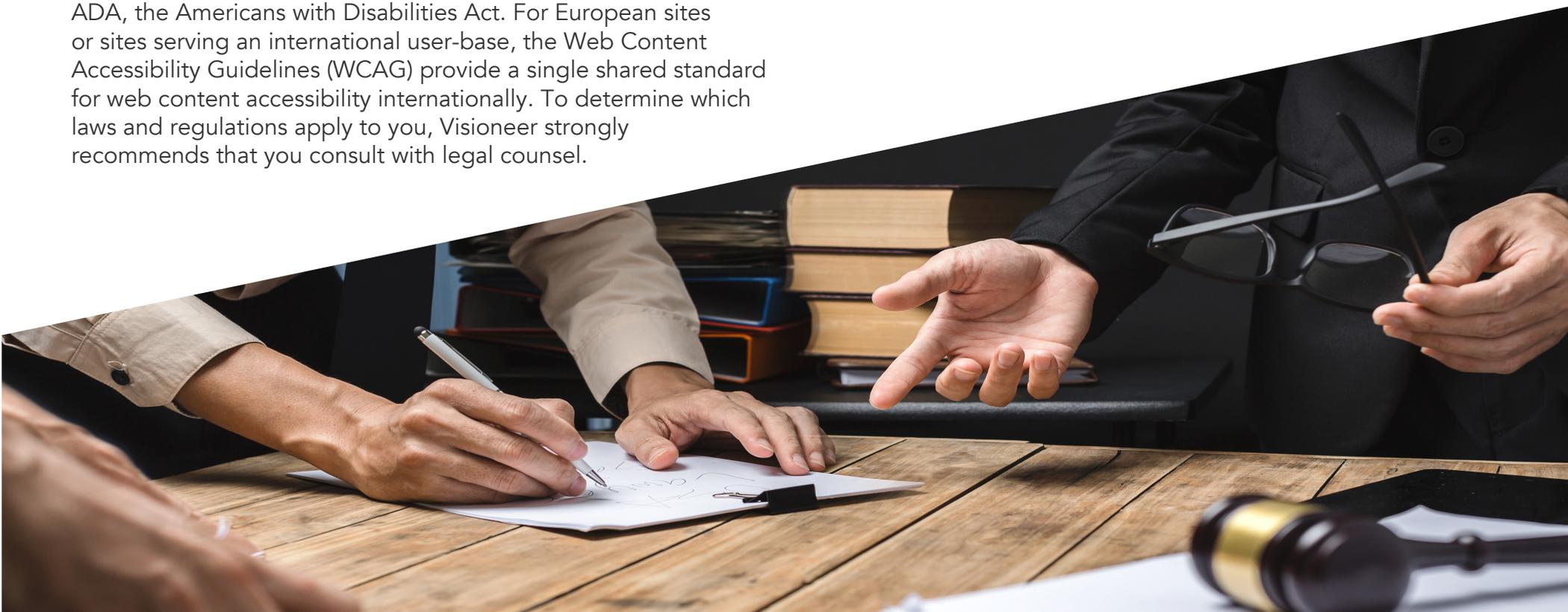
Website ADA Compliance for Website Owners

What is web accessibility?

According to the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), "The Web is fundamentally designed to work for all people, whatever their hardware, software, language, culture, location, or physical or mental ability. When the Web meets this goal, it is accessible to people with a diverse range of hearing, movement, sight, and cognitive ability. However, when websites, web technologies, or web tools are badly designed, they can create barriers that exclude people from using the Web." Web accessibility is a new and confusing topic for many people, but in simple terms, we are referring to making websites accessible to those with disabilities. Every business must comply with some level of accessibility compliance. There are specific requirements for federal sites via Section 508, an amendment to the United States Workforce Rehabilitation Act. Most other U.S. sites need to comply with ADA, the Americans with Disabilities Act. For European sites or sites serving an international user-base, the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) provide a single shared standard for web content accessibility internationally. To determine which laws and regulations apply to you, Visioneer strongly recommends that you consult with legal counsel.

Who does web accessibility, or lack thereof, impact?

In the same way many stores and restaurants offer entrances and facilities that are accessible to individuals with disabilities, people are becoming more aware of the need to make websites accessible to everyone, in an effort to end online exclusion. People with all kinds of disabilities can be prevented from having full use of the internet due to inaccessible sites. Those with visual disabilities are often unable to use a site if it isn't screen-reader compatible. Those with hearing, physical, or cognitive disabilities as well as the elderly can find certain sites to be inaccessible, while sites that include flashing elements can trigger seizures in those with photosensitive epilepsy. Accessibility also helps general usability for all your current and future customers, members, or readers drawn to your site.



What are the benefits of having an accessible site?

If your website is inaccessible to those with disabilities, you are potentially excluding nearly one-fifth of the population from visiting it, not to mention limiting your potential customer base. Online grocery store shopping, for example, could be hugely beneficial to those with disabilities, and if you take the time to make your site accessible, you are likely to be rewarded with valuable customer loyalty—especially now, while accessible sites stand out from the crowd.

According to W3C, UK supermarket Tesco increased their revenue by £13 million (almost \$19 million U.S. dollars) a year by making their website accessible to visually impaired users. Incidentally, they found that users without visual disabilities also preferred the more accessible variation of their site. As many can discover through A/B testing, minor changes to a site can have a huge impact on conversion rate; you're likely to receive an increase in conversion from all users if the general preference is for the site redesign.

In fact, there are many benefits to making your website accessible. In addition to broadening your customer base and increasing usability, accessibility also helps search engine crawlers read and interpret page content, so you'll potentially achieve greater visibility and put your business in front of a larger audience.

Most importantly, having an accessible site means you're opening the door to users who would find it difficult or even impossible to work with you if your site were inaccessible, and thus, you're promoting an inclusive online community.



Accessibility is NOT optional

Digital accessibility is not just a smart business practice or the right thing to do. In most cases, it is also a legal requirement. The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in places of public accommodation, private businesses such as hotels, retail stores, restaurants and even in theaters that are open to the general public.

According to the US Department of Justice the Americans with Disability Act also applies to websites and other digital outlets that are an extension of a business's physical presence. Lawsuits and complaints are not topics that any business owner with an digital presence wants to think about. Which is why we believe that accessibility is an essential component that simply can't be thought of as an extra.

Creating a accessibility strategy to your website is some that should be built in at the beginning versus as an after thought. We want to help you take that first step towards protecting your reputation by making your digital presence accessible to everyone.



Accessibility Checklist

While the checklist below doesn't include every possible thing you can do to make your site accessible, it's a good start.



PERCEIVABLE

Information and user interface components must be presentable to users in ways they can perceive.

- Use alt tags on all images.
- Add captions and/or text-based transcripts to audio/video content.
- Don't just use color or shape to convey meaning; combine color, shape, and text for clarity.
- Give users the ability to change font size.
- Keep layouts simple and intuitive.
- Display content in sequential order with an easy-to-understand visual hierarchy.
- Use high color contrast between text and background colors.
- Avoid Flash or other proprietary technologies.



OPERABLE

User interface components and navigation must be operable with a variety of tools.

- Make sure content can be navigated using only a keyboard.
- Design for mobile and touchscreen users.
- Give users enough time before sessions time out.
- Do not design content in a way that is known to cause seizures (like flashing text).
- Make button text descriptive (don't use 'click here').
- Use HTML 5 content structure guidelines.
- Provide ways to help users navigate, find content, and determine where they are.
- Use breadcrumb navigation, if possible.



UNDERSTANDABLE

Websites must use clear, concise language and offer functionality that is easy to comprehend.

- Write in clear, plain language.
- Use descriptive link and heading text.
- Avoid figures of speech, idioms, etc.
- Align text to the left and maintain a clear and consistent layout.
- Consider using alternate content formats, such as audio or video.
- Give reminders and prompts, don't force users to remember things from previous pages.
- Make button clickable areas large and clear; don't require exacting precision.
- Make form field instructions very clear.



ROBUST

Websites should work well enough across platforms, browsers, and devices to account for personal choice and user need.

- Use standards-based website development.
- Test content and interactivity with assistive technologies.

What will I need to do to make my site accessible?

Depending on the needs and adjustments for accessibility, site preparations might entail the following:

- Whole site audit color reskin or re-theme
- Updating media content with closed captioning and audio/ video transcripts
- Going through content and adding in additional text
- Alternatives to visuals

Reworking page functionality to better improve usability

- Redesigning components of the site to account for all user types
- Strategizing content and layout to have better organization and readability
- Creating better context for links and clearer messaging
- Form restructure for easier flow and understanding
- Full site overhaul to resolve dated techniques such as table layouts



The Visioneer Accessibility solution is transforming web accessibility by replacing a costly, manual process with automated, state-of-the-art AI technology



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VISIONEER

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For organizations looking to achieve a sustainable, long-term accessibility strategy, Visioneer offers a leading-edge technology backed by experienced accessibility subject matter experts. In a cost-effective and timely manner, our accessibility solution makes digital content more accessible, and more usable, for everyone.

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